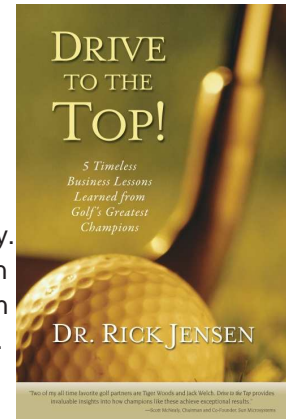


"Drive to the Top" Book Excerpt

Trust in Others

Champions are smart enough to know when they need help, and they are not embarrassed to ask for it. World-class athletes turn to coaches, athletic trainers, sports psychologists, biomechanists, physical therapists, and sports optometrists for the assistance they need to stay on track.

After winning his second U.S. Open in 2004, Retief Goosen was asked how sports psychologist Jos Vanstiphout had helped him prepare for his earlier victory. "I always felt my swing was pretty much there," Goosen explained, "but I knew on the inside I wasn't thinking right. I wasn't positive enough, not focusing enough on what's in hand and thinking of too many other things going on around the course. That's when I started working with Jos."



Jack Nicklaus has spoken many times of the debt he owes to his longtime teacher, Jack Grout. Nicklaus told me that he started working with Grout when he was only ten, and that relationship continued through most of Nicklaus's career as a PGA Tour player. In other words, even after Jack Nicklaus had become one of the most successful athletes in the history of the game, he still needed his teacher's advice.

Part of the reason was because Grout was able to help Nicklaus understand the "whys" of a particular situation. If Nicklaus was in a slump, he knew that he was in a slump. That wasn't the problem. What he didn't know was why he was in a slump. But once he did know, with Grout's help, he could start to do something about it. By the same token, if he was performing well, Nicklaus wanted to understand why he was performing well. Jack Grout was able to bring that kind of perspective to the situation that Nicklaus couldn't do by himself.

Another great golfer, Phil Mickelson, offered this high praise for his longtime caddy, Jim "Bones" McKay, in a 2005 interview: "He's been very helpful in a lot of areas, but he is very clutch and comes through at critical times with pulling the right clubs or reading the right breaks on the greens, and I'm very fortunate to have him. He's saved me a lot of shots and has been instrumental in a number of my wins, if not all of them."

Effective businesspeople do much the same thing. They know how to draw on the best expertise from all levels of their organizations. And when necessary, they reach outside of their organization for expertise it doesn't possess.

Top performers know that their efforts multiply exponentially as they learn to rely on others. Winners are able to let go of control where their control isn't absolutely essential, to empower others, to delegate tasks and responsibility, and to thrive on the accomplishments and efforts of those around them. In business, as in sports, champions must build effective teams that collectively work toward a common goal. Individuals who are unable to let go of any control, who feel compelled to micromanage every last detail, or do not have the ability to empower and trust others to succeed, as well, will never reach as high a level.